



# FE Week

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**ANNUAL REVIEW**



**TOUGH QUESTIONS  
FOR PRINCIPALS**

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## SFA HITS PROVIDERS WITH SHOCK FUNDING CLAWBACK WARNING

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**EXCLUSIVE**

More than 700 colleges and independent learning providers have been warned by the Skills Funding Agency (SFA) that they face a shock clawback on 2013/14 funding after it "identified some provision that has been incorrectly claimed," *FE Week* can reveal.

Una Bennett, deputy director for funding systems for the SFA, wrote to providers with the warning before Christmas — and after the SFA's own auditors signed off provider accounts last autumn.

Her correspondence, leaked to *FE Week*, read: "We will contact you in the next few weeks to share the specific details of your learners that are affected... We will then calculate the final value of overpayment and discuss with you the repayment."

The problem claims included, she said, apprenticeships that did not meet the minimum duration criteria and learners aged 24 and over studying at level two and below where full funding had been claimed but data had not been submitted identifying the learner as eligible — meaning they therefore should have been co-funded. However, the SFA declined to comment on how much it planned to claim back or how many of the providers it audited received the letter.

The problem has seen the SFA come under fire in its online Feconnect forum, where among those to post was Stephen Hewitt, strategic funding, enrolments and examinations manager at Morley College.

Although he hadn't received one of the letters, he told *FE Week*: "Coming up with stuff like this after the data was finalised is ridiculous. We are not talking about high level fraud here. If there is inadequate data it is because we were not given the right guidance."

Among the providers to have received the letter was Newcastle College Group (NCG), which had the greatest final Adult Skills Budget funding figure among colleges last academic year at £31.7m. Its group director of planning and performance, Chris Payne, said: "We put a lot of time and effort into our data collection and are always keen to ensure our returns are as accurate as possible, so we await the more detailed response from the SFA alluded to in the letter."

It follows a difficult year for SFA data collection with repeated breakdowns of new online systems (see page 6), although a spokesperson said the letter was not connected to the problems.

Stewart Segal, chief executive of the Association of Employment and Learning Providers, said: "The issues should have been clear from error reports through the year, but we know that there have been some data collection issues over the same period."

Julian Gravatt, Association of Colleges assistant chief executive, said: "The biggest immediate problem for colleges who received this email is that they don't know how much the SFA will request as repayment."

**Continued on page 3 with funding analysis**

**Ofsted claims  
Barnfield College  
performance was  
"over-inflated"...**



**So should Sir  
Peter hand  
back his FE  
knighthood?**

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Troubled Barnfield College has been described by Ofsted as having "no key strengths" — prompting question marks over whether former principal Sir Peter Birkett deserved his 2012 knighthood for services to FE and the academy movement.

Luton South MP Gavin Shuker blamed the college's problems — the most recent of which was a damning inadequate grading — on the federation of academies which Sir Peter set up from 2007.

"Sir Peter Birkett took an outstanding college, starved it of resources and focussed on building a network of schools that sadly has ended up with an inadequate college and that's a tragedy," said Mr Shuker.

He added that the honours system "recognises achievements — but these achievements have been shown to be

nowhere near as effective as we originally thought."

Indeed, Ofsted's report told how "a number of factors contributed to an over-inflation of the performance of the college".

Sir Peter's knighthood had already proved contentious, with an online petition in April calling for him to rescind the honour winning the support of 183 people.

Although he left the college in July 2013, audits later uncovered a £1m funding overstatement, leading to claims of ghost learners, investigations by the Skills Funding Agency and Education Funding Agency and an FE Commissioner visit.

Sir Peter declined to comment on his knighthood.

**See page 2 for more**

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NEWS

COLLEGE STEPS IN WITH A4E SET TO WALK AWAY FROM LONDON PRISONS

BY PAUL OFFORD AND REBECCA COONEY  
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A general FE college has stepped in after a major private provider pulled out early from London’s £17m prison education contract, *FE Week* can reveal.

Welfare-to-work provider A4e gave three months’ notice to the SFA in August that it was terminating its Offender Learning and Skills Service (Olass) contract for the Capital’s 13 prisons.

It agreed to carry on running the service for another two months after the Skills Funding Agency (SFA) failed to sign up a replacement provider to take on the contract by its original December deadline.

But the SFA has now confirmed that The Manchester College, which already holds the North East, North West, Kent and Sussex, and Yorkshire and Humberside Olass4 contracts, will take over for London prisons from next month.

An SFA spokesperson told *FE Week*: “Following the recent procurement exercise, we are pleased to confirm that The Manchester College has been successful and will be delivering the Olass contract in London with effect from February 1.

“The Manchester College will continue to work closely with the National Offender Management Service (NOMS), the SFA and the current London Olass provider to ensure a smooth transition for learners and staff.”

Peter Cox (pictured),



director of commercial development at The Manchester College, said: “We are excited about the opportunity to expand our services into these additional establishments to raise the aspirations and skills of learners in custody, to help increase employability and reduce reoffending.”

A college spokesperson said it would take on all 600 staff currently employed by A4E on the London contract, through the transfer of undertakings protection of employment (TUPE) process.

Rod Clark, chief executive of the Prisoners Education Trust, said: “We’re delighted the uncertainty surrounding the future of the contract has come to an end for the sake of staff and learners.”

The SFA told *FE Week* in August that the three providers, other than A4e, to have won Olass4 contracts — the Manchester College, Milton Keynes College and Weston College — had been invited to apply to take over for London.

A4e won London’s Olass4 contract in August 2012 and had been expected to deliver the training until July 2016.

It had won the work with Kensington and Chelsea College having delivered all three of London’s previous prison education contracts since the Olass system was first rolled out across the country in 2006.

An A4E spokesperson said the company would continue to run its Olass4 contract for 14 prisons in the East of England.

College, which is due to submit plans to BIS to split from the federation of academies built up under former leader Sir Peter Birkett from 2007, said governors “fully accepted” Ofsted’s findings.

“This is an unacceptable failure by a significant majority of the previous management, governors and teaching staff,” he said. “On behalf of the college, I have apologised to students for that failure.”

It is the latest in a series of blows for the college following government probes with auditor KPMG finding it had overclaimed more than £1m for provision that had never happened, leading to allegations of ghost learners.

Meanwhile, Dr Collins later identified a “general feeling among all levels of the organisation that the college has been relatively neglected in the previous director general/CEO’s [Sir Peter’s] pursuit of attempting to grow the overall federation into a national business”.

And Luton South MP Gavin Shukler said the Ofsted rating could be blamed on Sir Peter’s focus on creating the Barnfield Federation academy chain.

“The criticisms in the report reflect how poor management decisions have affected teaching and staff,” he said.

“We’ve still got brilliant staff there but

FE WEEK NEWS IN BRIEF

**Skills Minister to face MPs**

Skills Minister Nick Boles will face questions from MPs on what apprenticeships and traineeships are doing for young people.

He will give evidence to the Education Select Committee on Wednesday (January 14) at 9.30am in the final session of its investigation into the programmes for 16 to 19-year-olds.

Ofsted FE and skills director Lorna Fitzjohn and Paul Champion, assistant principal for work-based learning at Chesterfield College, among others have given evidence to committee’s inquiry.

**Loan applications lagging**

FE loan applications are continuing to lag behind last year, with almost 7,000 fewer applications so far this year.

Figures for December released by the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills show 50,650 applications for the loans for learners over 24 had been made so far in 2014/15, compared to a cumulative total of 57,181 by the same time in 2013.

It comes after a late-summer rush predicted by government failed to boost numbers to the levels seen in 2013/14.

**Maximus gets contract**

Occupational health provider Maximus will take over a multi-million pound contract to find work for long-term unemployed people from Newcastle College Group (NCG).

The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) issued NCG with a 12-month notice of termination for its Work Programme contract covering the North East Yorkshire and Humber region in March last year.

The DWP said Sussex-based firm Maximus would take over next month and that NCG, the only FE college to have handled the programme, lost the contract because of its performance.

Barnfield’s commissioner first after Ofsted blow

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Barnfield College is set to become the first college to receive two full visits from FE Commissioner Dr David Collins, following an inadequate Ofsted inspection result.

The Luton-based college went from a grade three to four rating, with inspectors finding the college had “no key strengths” while viewing success rates, teaching and learning as inadequate.

The Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) said the result would trigger a visit from Dr Collins, whose visit in January last year followed a Skills Funding Agency (SFA) assessment of inadequate for financial control at the college.

A BIS spokesperson told *FE Week*: “The FE Commissioner’s assessment of Barnfield College in January 2014 recommended new financial regulations and controls be put in place urgently and changes were made to the governance and leadership.

“The commissioner has found progress in addressing financial concerns. He is now due to re-assess the college, focusing his attention on quality of provision and the actions put in place to address the issues identified by Ofsted.”

Robin Somerville, chair of Barnfield

they need additional resources and they need steady management which we’ve not had in recent years.”

Sir Peter, who left Barnfield in July 2013, said: “It saddens me to read the Ofsted report.”

He added: “I am not sure how this has been allowed to happen and hope senior management have now put strategies in place to rectify the points raised in the report and I wish them well for the future.”

Lydia Richards, University and College Union regional official for Eastern and Home Counties, said: “The poor leadership and financial mismanagement identified last year at Barnfield College has evidently had a negative effect on overall performance, despite continued hard work and commitment from staff.”

Interim principal Monica Box is due to step down in March for Tim Eyton-Jones, currently principal of John Ruskin College, to take over.

Mr Somerville said Ms Box had “already started the urgent and robust work to correct the failings identified by Ofsted.”

And Mr Eyton-Jones said: “We will be implementing a range of robust and established quality improvement models as well as some innovative initiatives to support the turnaround.”

See [feweek.co.uk](http://feweek.co.uk) for more.

NEWS

# Two thirds of providers fail to hit allocations

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Two thirds of FE and skills providers failed to deliver their final 2013/14 Adult Skills Budget (ASB) allocation by a total of £111.8m, *FE Week* can reveal.

Skills Funding Agency (SFA) allocations data shows that 888 colleges and independent learning providers (ILPs) were earmarked a total of £2,210.7m ASB cash in June.

But *FE Week* research comparing these allocations with final funding figures for last academic year showed that while 217 providers got a total of £20.6m more than they had been allocated, and 79 met their allocation figure, 592 were paid a total of £111.8m less than their combined allocation figure.

And with SFA deputy director for funding systems Una Bennett having warned of incorrect claims by providers (see front), it is likely that the final overall figure could yet fall as funding is clawed back — meaning a potential rise in the number of providers paid less than their allocation.

Julian Gravatt, assistant chief executive of the Association of Colleges, said: “There are some big variances in the numbers and some big well-known companies have fallen short in their plans just as some colleges have. At the same time, underspends on apprenticeships need to be looked at alongside overspends on other education and training for adults.

“Things were complicated in 2013/2014 because there was a new SFA formula [funding calculation] introduced, the start of 24+ advanced learning loans, funding cuts averaging 15 per cent and the IT systems didn’t work properly.”

With the government viewing delivery of apprenticeships as a priority, it is likely that providers paid more than their allocations delivered more numbers than expected on the programme.

And when looking at SFA data showing just final funding levels versus the value of delivery per provider, those who did more training than they were funded for were likely to be running more non-apprenticeship — or non-priority — programmes than they had been allocated for.

Indeed, while the combined 2013/14 ASB final funding for colleges and ILPs was £2,164.8m, they actually delivered £2,230.6m-worth of training. It meant that providers delivered £65.7m-worth of unfunded training. It was a similar story in 2012/13 when there was £61.8m-worth of training delivered, but not paid for.

But in 2011/12, when the SFA allowed colleges to keep funding for which there had been no delivery, there was £91m of SFA cash given out despite no education or training — although the SFA reduced some allocations the following year to make up for the overpayment.

Stewart Segal, Association of Employment and Learning Providers chief executive, said: “The final figures for [2013/14] delivery show how complex the contract management system is.



Julian Gravatt



Stewart Segal

	Number of providers	Proportion of providers	Variance
Exceeded final allocation	217	24%	£20.6m
Matched final allocation	79	9%	£0
Fell short of final allocation	592	67%	-£111.8m
Total providers	888		-£91.2m

Sources: SFA 2013/14 final allocations (<http://bit.ly/1AKxtS7>) and SFA final funding year values (<http://bit.ly/1FtMQmb>)

## Learndirect records biggest ASB shortfall

Learndirect had the biggest shortfall in delivery of ASB provision for which it had been allocated SFA cash among all providers.

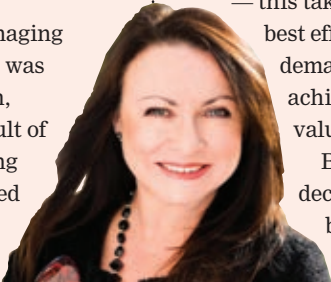
The ILP was given £6.4m less funding than it had been finally allocated for 2013/14 in June, when it was earmarked £129.3m by the SFA.

The two other ILPs with the greatest shortfalls were London-based Babcock Training Limited (£4m) and Sussex-based HIT Training (£3.2m).

Adrian Beddow, communications manager at Learndirect, said: “Like many providers we were tasked with supporting the government priority of apprenticeships. As a result, in 2013/2014, we saw more of our funding moving from adult skills into apprenticeships, at the start of the funding year as well as in-year.

“The changes in-year meant we over-supplied on our ASB because the demand was there and we had already contracted out our funding allocation to our partners. However, in our apprenticeships delivery, the in-year changes proved challenging given the timeframes we were working with. This, together with the introduction of 24+ advanced learning loans which decreased the size of our target audience for much of the year, meant we fell short of our final allocation.”

Jill Whittaker (pictured), managing director of HIT Training, which was allocated £26.2m and given £23m, said: “In 2013/2014, and as a result of increased demand for its training provision, HIT Training exceeded the original [ASB] contract [allocation], dated July 2, 2013,



by £6.2m.

“The second version of the contract, dated January 8, 2014, was exceeded by £1.7m.

“Further variations to contract, including increases in apprenticeship and traineeship allocations, were received in March 2014 and June 2014. Apprenticeship and traineeship demand cannot be turned on at short notice. For many years AELP has emphasised the role of training organisations in raising awareness of apprenticeship programmes — this takes time. While we made our best efforts to stimulate additional demand, we were unable to achieve the entire contract value.”

Babcock Training Limited declined to comment. It had been allocated £30.5m and given £26.5m.

## Apprentice subcontracting behind lack of delivery

The three colleges with the greatest delivery shortfalls on their 2013/14 ASB allocations missed out on a total of £10.2m SFA cash.

Newcastle College Group (NCG) failed to deliver £4.3m, Birmingham Metropolitan College (BMet) £3.5m, and Hull College £2.4m.

Chris Payne, group director of planning and performance at NCG, which was given £31.7m by the SFA having been allocated £36m, said: “Much of this shortfall was where NCG was awarded additional apprenticeship contract value bid for in-year for delivery via subcontractors.

“However, we could not find sufficient numbers of contractors who would have been able to deliver training of the right quality.

“It was not included in our budgets at the start of the year, so there is a very limited impact on last year’s budget and there is no impact on long-term allocations this year.

“In some areas, such as discretionary learner support, we invested an extra £1m which the SFA has funded and which balances out some of the under-spend on apprenticeships.”

A spokesperson for BMet, which was given £21.3m having been allocated £24.8m, said: “The changed funding position for BMet’s ASB is the result of consolidation following the merger between Stourbridge College and BMet in 2013.

“Our financial position and balance sheet remain strong and we have recently been graded outstanding for financial health by the SFA. The college offers a broad range of adult provision, with a strong focus on employability skills.”

A spokesperson for Hull College, given £16.7m having been allocated £19.1m, said: “The shortfall in adult funding delivery in 2013/2014 is solely attributable to the group’s strategic plan in-year to reduce the volume of subcontractors delivering adult apprenticeships.”

### Continued from front

“It’s clearly essential that college data is accurate and their funding claims correct, but the software supplied to colleges to manage funding didn’t work properly. If the SFA has now found errors, these weren’t picked up by the auditors who visited a sample of colleges in September.”

Dr Lynne Sedgmore, 157 Group executive director, said: “The timing and vagueness of this important funding communication is undesirable and will have caused concern to colleges over Christmas. We expect the SFA to move swiftly in January to give colleges exact details of their supposed overclaims.”

An SFA spokesperson said: “We will now begin to work with these training organisations and colleges to check that their data is correct.”



NEW YEAR HONOURS

Caretakers' honour as New Year awa

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The new year got off to a flying start for FE and skills with more than 30 sector figures named in the 2015 Honours list.

And it wasn't just the well-known names and faces who were honoured — the contribution all staff make to learners was recognised, not least with Christopher Willder, groundsperson at Brooksby Melton College, and James Jackson, caretaker at Woodhouse College, in line for British Empire Medals (BEMs).

The sector also gained a new Dame in Nestle UK boss Fiona Kendrick following her contribution to skills development, four CBEs, 11 OBEs, a dozen MBEs and a total of seven BEMs.

Association of Colleges chief executive Martin Doel congratulated those who were honoured, paying particular attention to the six principals listed.

He said: "Principals work tirelessly for their college, students and local community and receiving such a high honour is a sign of how important their work is considered to be.

"I offer my congratulations to everyone who received an award — it is very well deserved."

An Association of Employment and Learning Providers (AELP) spokesperson said it was "really encouraged" to see the efforts of so many from the FE sector recognised.

"AELP extends its warmest congratulations to its members who have received awards and to others in the FE and skills sector," he said.

National Institute of Adult Continuing Education chief executive David Hughes said the honours helped "highlight the many personal, social and economic benefits FE and skills brings".

'I wanted to jump up and down



Former Association of Colleges president and Bradford College principal Michele Sutton struggled to keep her CBE honour a secret.

"I wanted to jump up and down and tell everybody," she told *FE Week*.

"I was delighted — it's so nice to know even when you have left somewhere that the skills and expertise you put in have been recognised."

Ms Sutton, who already has an OBE, was joined in the CBE list by former Skills Funding Agency (SFA) interim chief executive Barbara Spicer.

Ms Spicer, who stepped down from her SFA role in September to head up construction firm Plus Dane Group, scooped her gong for services to education, learning and skills.

She said: "This award is the product of a team effort, a hugely supportive family and the amazing people I've worked with over the last 20 years."

Colin Booth, from Barnsley College, Ian



Clinton, from Stockport College and Walsall College's Jatinder Sharma were all awarded OBEs for services to FE.

Mr Booth, who has run Barnsley College for six years, said: "I am very proud of the things that I have helped to make happen so far in 30 years of working in the FE sector.

"I have had the fortune to work for and with some of the best people in the FE sector and most importantly I have had innovative, imaginative and committed people working for me.

"This honour truly is a reflection of the effort of everyone I have worked with."

Mr Clinton took over Stockport College in February. He was previously in charge of Blackburn College and said: "I believe the sector is essential for a skills and education system that supports future economic prosperity and I am proud to have spent many years surrounded by learners who have such talent and aspirations and colleagues who



work relentlessly to help them achieve their goals.

"For this reason I am humbled but delighted to be given such a prestigious award for services to the sector."

Mr Sharma, whose college was the first to achieve an outstanding rating under Ofsted's current common inspection framework, said: "I am very humbled by this achievement which would not have been possible without the fantastic support of the governors, staff and students who make Walsall College outstanding, and my family."

There was also an OBE for Rodney Bennion, for services to construction training and the community in the South East, in recognition of his work with the Construction Youth Trust (CYT).

He was chair of trustees for the charity, which helps young people to access training, education and employment opportunities in the construction industry, for 12 years before

Care on campus leads to medals joy



Two college caretakers with almost 70 years' experience between them came in for BEMs in the New Year Honours.

Christopher Willder has been the groundsperson at Leicestershire's Brooksby Melton College for 54 years and said he felt "complete surprise and delight" when he found out he'd been honoured for services to horticulture and land-based education.

"I had no idea I was ever likely to be considered for such a medal," he said.

"My brother got an honour several years ago for services to teaching so I am chuffed that I can now say so have I."

He added: "You don't stay somewhere for 54 years if you don't enjoy it. I have enjoyed seeing the place change from only having a handful of students to being a busy place with hundreds studying a variety of land-based courses."

Principal Chris Ball said Mr Willder's long career at the college had been "exceptional".

"Chris is a well-respected member of the college staff and liked by everyone who is or



has been fortunate to work with him," he said.

"He possesses a wealth of knowledge about the college and its history and has brought laughter in his many tales of past experiences of working and living on the Brooksby campus"

James Jackson is caretaker at Barnet's Woodhouse College and was also daunted to find out about his BEM for services to education.

"You get this letter and it says Cabinet Office on it and you think 'well I've paid my taxes so what can it be?'" he said.

"And then it says the Prime Minister has asked to put your name down for the Queen and you think 'blimey, this is serious'."

Mr Jackson has worked at the sixth form college since 1990.

"I love my job — I especially love the young people and it's important to communicate and ask them what they're up to," he said.

"It keeps me young, I think."

Mr Jackson said it had been "a shock" to realise someone had put him forward.



# ards bring wide-ranging recognition

## — ex-AoC president



Ian Clinton

standing down six months ago.

He told *FE Week*: “I have worked in the construction industry for 50 years and always believed in the talents of young people. If you don’t utilise their talents then you have got problems.

“This award is not just for me, it is for the whole of CYT — all the people who work there and the young people we have helped over the years.”

And services to FE earned Chesterfield College governors’ board chair Frank Smith an OBE, too.

Chesterfield principal Stuart Cutforth said: “We are delighted that Frank has received this great honour, it’s well deserved for the years of dedicated service he has given to Chesterfield College. Throughout his time here Frank’s commitment to ensuring young people receive the best education and are equipped with the skills and knowledge to progress into work or further study has been clear for all to see.”



Jatinder Sharma



Rodney Bennion



Frank Smith

## Skills scoop honour for Fiona



Fiona Kendrick

The New Year Honours provided a sweet treat for Nestle UK chief executive Fiona Kendrick, who was awarded a damehood for services to skills development and also the food and drink industry.

She became president of the Food and Drink Federation in November and said she was hoping to use her role to raise the profile of skills training in the sector.

“I particularly want to encourage our industry to provide employment and training opportunities for young people,” she said.

Nestle employed 51 apprentices as of March, when it announced plans to take on up to 50 new learners by the end of the year, at which point 15 were due to have finished their training.

It offers four apprenticeship programmes — four-year in engineering; three-year in processing; two-year in manufacturing; and, one-year in operating.

## New Year Honours round-up

The following FE and skills-related people were also recognised:

**CBE:** For services to FE — Dawn Ward OBE, principal, Burton and South Derbyshire College; for services to the jewellery sector and apprenticeships — Jason Holt, chief executive, Holts Group, and founder, Holts Academy

**OBE:** For services to FE and teaching — Sue Crowley, lately chair, Institute for Learning; for services to education — Maura Regan, principal, Carmel College, and chief executive, Carmel Education Trust; for services to training and improvements — David Timothy Marsh, offender outcomes unit manager, HM Prison Barlinnie; for services to agri-food education — Dr John Damien Fay, director, College of Agriculture, Food and Rural Enterprise, Northern Ireland Executive; for services to FE in North East Wales — David Baden Jones, principal and chief executive, Coleg Cambria, and lately principal and chief executive, Deeside College; for services to the community in Rochdale — Robert Clegg, Hopwood Hall College Corporation chair

**MBE:** For services to FE — Sheila Selwood, lately director of governance, West Herts College, and member, Association of Colleges governors’ council; for services to FE and training — Nicky Perry, director, Beyond Standards; for services to FE for adults with learning difficulties — Maryanne Hodgkinson, head of arts, media and business administration, Derwen College; for services to skills training — Jean Duprez, senior manager, K&M McLoughlin Decorating Ltd, and Ambassador, London Chamber of Commerce; for services to education — Susan Jane Kirkham, lately curriculum and assessment specialist, Association of School and College Leaders; for services to young people through the ICT apprentice scheme — Gail Ramsden, senior officer, IT skills and capability manager, Valuation Office Agency; for services to apprenticeships in the chemical and process industries — George Ritchie, lately senior vice president, Sembcorp UK; for services to public administration — Celia Romain, higher executive officer, joint apprenticeships unit, Department for Business, Innovation and Skills & Department for Education; for services to FE in Northern Ireland — Celine McCartan, deputy director, head of corporate and support services, South West College; for services to education in Northern Ireland — William James Greer, Head, Training Organisation, South Eastern Regional College

**BEM:** For services to FE and to the community in Leicestershire — Anne Williams, lately community development officer, Loughborough College, and borough councillor, Charnwood; for services to further and higher education and to the community in Cornwall — Alan Lemin, head of student recruitment, Plymouth College of Art; for services to prison education — Wendy Ann Sherlock, curriculum co-ordinator for further and higher learning, HM Prison The Mount; for services to adult education — Sharon Tinn, learning in the community worker, Ellesmere Port, Cheshire; for services to education and training in the construction sector in Wales — Ann-Marie Smale, director, Powell Dobson Architects

See [feweek.co.uk](http://feweek.co.uk) for more coverage of the New Year Honours, including quotes from those listed above.

# for Christopher and James

“I think like most of the general public I always thought normal people should get awards too but when it came to me — I never thought I’d get one,” he said.

“My family are over the moon, especially my wife, she’s my rock. We’re both royalists so we’re really looking forward to the royal garden party.”

Julie McLean, director of work based learning and school partnerships at City College Plymouth, said she was in “total shock” when she found out about her MBE.

“It’s an honour for the people I’ve worked with for 29 years,” she said.

Ms McLean, who works helping disengaged young people into work or training, has experience of unemployment herself, but was helped by a programme similar to the one she now runs.

“I love my job, I’m so proud of the department and what we do for people who are unemployed,” she said.

Shirley Davis-Fox, chair of ISA Training, who was given an MBE for her services to the



Julie McLean

hairdressing industry, has also experienced the importance of vocational training first hand.

“I’m one of those people who left school at 15 without any qualifications, and here I am,” she said.

“I believe passionately in the hair industry — it gets a lot of stick, but why shouldn’t my



Shirley Davis-Fox

apprentices feel like they can do anything? I want them to feel that the world is their oyster.”

She added: “I’m just doing my job — so to be given an award for something you love and believe totally in, it’s wonderful to have recognition for working in the vibrant sector I’m privileged to be a part of.”



# Counting the cost of Labour's pl

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Labour's apprenticeship proposals could cost taxpayers as much as £11.7bn over the course of the next parliament, according to Treasury research.

Costings of 28 Labour policies were published on Monday (January 5), including three on apprenticeships and a further four affecting the wider FE and skills sector (see sections on right). They suggested Labour's spending plans would include £1.5bn on apprenticeships in the first year alone.

Chancellor George Osborne said: "This is an objective, thorough, and detailed cost analysis of Labour's policy agenda." But in Labour's rebuttal, published the following day, Shadow Chancellor Ed Balls, described the costings as "riddled with untruths and errors" and "a political smear based on false assumptions".

Dr Lynne Sedgemore, 157 Group executive director, said exchanging "hypothetical figures" was "unhelpful" especially when both main parties support broadly similar policy themes in regard to skills — an increase in apprenticeships, more training for those out of work and the establishment of new types of institution. "If the cost of policies is to be a focus for the election campaign, we hope that the clear return on investment —

both economic and social — delivered by a thriving, high quality skills system will also be factored fairly into the debate," she said.

The Association of Employment and Learning Providers chief executive Stewart Segal said: "None of these Labour policy options have been set out in any detail. The costings of these policy options are also fairly speculative and much will depend on the detail of the proposals."

He added: "The positive return on investment of these programmes to the UK economy has been proven time and again so it not just a question of cost."

A spokesperson for the

Association of Colleges said: "It is important that whoever forms the next Government is mindful of what colleges need."

Labour's apprenticeship policies costed by the Treasury were, firstly, plans to make all apprenticeships level three and above and to increase the minimum duration from one to two years for non-technical apprenticeships and three years for technical ones.

The Treasury's costings for 19+ apprenticeships, based on the current apprenticeship funding system, put the price tag at £3.8bn in the next parliament, and £680m in the next year.

However, the Labour rebuttal document said their

policy was about quality in apprenticeships, not quantity. "In reality it would not cost any additional money... because it makes no commitment on the total number of apprentices," the document said.

"Our policy is about requiring that short courses that do not meet a minimum standard are not misleadingly branded as apprenticeships."

Labour has, however, said it would like the number of school leavers applying for apprenticeships increase to match the number starting university by 2025. And on this, the second costing assumes 185,000 18-year-olds



George Osborne



## Detailed breakdown of the Treasury's

**All FE teachers must be qualified or working towards it**

Treasury costing says:

- If costs include training new teachers and existing ones without qualifications (who should have completed by 2017/18) total cost over four years would be £433m for the FE sector
- Including school teachers, the total cost of ensuring all teachers were qualified

in 2015/16 would be £177m (£122m for FE, £55m for schools)

Labour says:

"This costing is wrong.

"We would manage this within existing budgets, just as the last Labour government did.

"Our policy would ensure that over time FE lecturers would train in greater numbers, it is wrong to assume that it would be any specific number in 2015-16."

**All Jobseekers to be assessed for maths and English and IT and required to take up training if they fall below a certain standard**

Treasury costing says:

- If jobseekers need level one English and entry level three maths, each qualification costs £714 and around 1,062,000 claimants needed screening, it would cost £513m in the first year
- This figure includes the cost of screening

## Morgan dodges MPs' careers questions

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Sector leaders have called for more detail about how a new company set up by government to improve careers advice will operate after Education Secretary Nicky Morgan deflected MPs' questions about the organisation.

The Association of Colleges (AoC) and Association of Employment and Learning Providers (AELP) said answers given by Ms Morgan when she appeared in front of the Education Select Committee on Wednesday (January 7) did not go far enough to allay concerns about careers advice.

During the hearing, Ms Morgan confirmed the initial £20m funding announced in Chancellor George Osborne's Autumn Statement would cover the first two years of the company's work, and that she hoped employers would pay for it after that.

But she deflected several other questions about how the organisation would run, and had to defend it after committee chair Graham Stuart pointed out similarities between its remit and that of the existing National Careers Service (NCS).

Martin Doel, AoC chief executive, said: "It is disappointing to hear that Nicky Morgan was not yet able to give further detail on how to tackle

failing careers advice.

"We would like to see the establishment of a careers hub in each local area, supported by schools, colleges, universities, local councils, employers and Jobcentre Plus to ensure that everyone has access to the high-quality impartial advice they deserve.

"We hope that the new careers and enterprise company set up by the government will consider our proposal as a means by which all involved can be incentivised to set aside their narrow institutional interest in favour of meeting the needs of young people."

An AELP spokesperson said: "The probing over how the new company will dovetail with the activities of the NCS has not alleviated our concerns about its creation.

"We would have preferred that England had an integrated all-age service built around the services of the NCS and that the Department for Education's new investment should have enhanced other existing services."

colleges, local communities and employers.

It would appear that from October 1 the very role for the NCS, which it's being expanded to do, is exactly the role which you now say the new organisation is going to do."

Ms Morgan said: "They will work in partnership together. The organisations are different. They will work together to deliver that same goal."

Her performance in front of the committee was later described as "evasive" by member Alex Cunningham.

Speaking at a launch event for a campaign by the National Union of Students (NUS), Unison and the Trades' Union Congress (TUC) for better careers advice that he hosted in parliament later on Wednesday, he said: "Everyone is united in saying this system is broken. The Secretary of State says she's listening but we need to make sure she hears as well."

A key demand of the joint campaign is to ensure access to face-to-face careers advice, as opposed to the online support currently offered by the NCS.

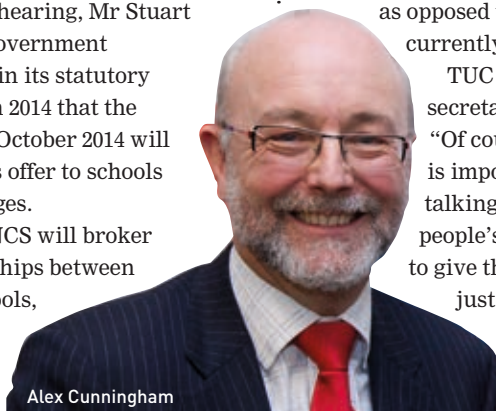
During the hearing, Mr Stuart said: "The government announced in its statutory guidance in 2014 that the NCS from October 2014 will expand its offer to schools and colleges.

"The NCS will broker relationships between schools,

TUC assistant general secretary Paul Nowak said: "Of course online information is important, but when you're talking about people's careers, people's working lives you need to give them more support than just a hyperlink — and we think there needs to be that frontline, face-to-face advice."



Nicky Morgan



Alex Cunningham

## Contingency plan for Hub breakdown

The Skills Funding Agency (SFA) has assured providers that it has a contingency plan after the Hub suffered the latest in a series of breakdowns.

The online data collection system failed on Monday (January 5) — less than 48 hours before the Individualised Learner Record (ILR) R05 (fifth return of the academic year) deadline. Among the problems suffered by the Hub have been breakdowns in August for R12, September for R13 and December for R14.

And complaints about the latest breakdown were posted on the SFA's Feconnect online forum and one disgruntled user called for an extension to the deadline, which was not granted by the SFA.

An SFA spokesperson told *FE Week*: "We have a contingency plan in place which we will invoke if we experience sustained problems with our data collection systems.

"We will inform providers of the move to the contingency plan through existing SFA communication channels." She added channels would include the regular SFA Updates, [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk), Twitter (@sfadata, @skillsfunding) and Feconnect.

The SFA initially kept the old online data collection (OLDC) system running alongside the Hub, after its launch in July, encouraging providers to submit returns through both systems.

However, the OLDC was shut down at the end of October prompting sector concern, reported by *FE Week* in November, that there was no back-up plan if the Hub broke down.



# ans to reform apprenticeships

start university in 2025 (based on projections from the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills), and apprenticeship costs remain the same as 2013/14. The Treasury costing therefore estimates the total cost over the next parliament, will be £5.5bn and £710m in 2015-16.

Labour rejected this, saying: “Ed Miliband made clear in his speech to Labour Party Conference September 2014 that this is a national goal for 2025, not a policy for immediate implementation.”

Labour has also said it would ensure that all public procurement contracts would include a requirement to hire one apprentice for each £1m awarded in

the contract. The third Treasury costing puts forward three financial outcomes for this.

The first assumes that any costs to the employer, such as salary, supervision, recruitment and administration are passed on to government by raising the contract price — resulting in a bill of £1.1bn to £2.4bn over the next parliament and up to £234m in the first year.

The second assumes only the apprentice’s salary is reclaimed, costing up to £1.1bn over the next parliament and £67m to £107m in the next year.

The third assumes the employer “nets off” the

productive contribution the apprentice makes to the business and the savings on fully trained workers’ salaries, from the apprentice’s salary, but still passes other costs on to Government, costing up to £1.4bn over the next parliament and up to £144m in the next year.

However, Labour said: “This policy would not lead to any additional spending on procurement over existing procurement budgets. Instead, this policy is about changing the requirements on the companies ahead of bidding for contracts and changing the way companies recruit rather than increasing costs.”



Dr Lynne Sedgemore

## £1.4bn to build 100 new UTCs

One of the policies costed by the Treasury is a suggestion made by Lord Adonis in his review, Mending the Fractured Economy: Starter State, Better Jobs, published in July, that 100 new University Technical Colleges (UTCs) should be opened by 2020.

The Treasury costing estimates a total of at least £1.419bn by 2025, assuming all new UTCs are up and running by 2020.

By far the biggest cost laid out in the document would be the capital cost to construct buildings, which the costings calculate at £1,315m up until 2022-23.

The total cost in the next Parliament (2015 until 2020) would be £1,112.18m.

However, Labour denied the idea of opening 100 new UTCs was even official Labour policy.

“What the government has costed is an idea proposed in the Adonis Review, which does not constitute Labour Party policy,” Labour’s rebuttal document said.

It also dismissed the costing figures as “wrong,” adding: “The Government has said itself that it would open more UTCs and we support this policy since it will take place within existing capital budgets.”

## controversial financial estimates

claimants and providing training for those who need it  
Labour says:  
“Funding is already provided to train adults who lack basic skills, so this policy will not impose additional costs.  
“The government’s own Skills Funding Statement sets out that funding is already available for adults in receipt of benefits where skills training will help them into work.”

**Out of work benefits for 18 to 21s replaced with a new youth allowance dependent on young people being in training. This would be means tested and apply to those without a level three qualification**  
Treasury costing says:  
• If youth allowance is paid at £57.35 per week, like JobSeeker’s Allowance and uses the same means test as university funding (tapering from £25,000 to £42,000), and if the numbers of unemployed people

aged 18 to 21 remain the same, the policy would cost £1.1bn to £1.4bn  
• However, the Treasury also estimates the policy would save £20m  
Labour says:  
“The Tories have examined only a limited range of options for how to deliver this change. We have been clear that there will be no proposals for borrowing in our manifesto, and that we will deliver this policy in a cost-neutral fashion.”

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# Twelve months of change for Skills Mi

The past year was a dramatic one for *FE Week* which saw a change of editor and a major re-design with publication of our 100th edition. Reporter Paul Offord looks back at the highlights of 2014, the 16 *FE Week* supplements and 35 newspapers published.

## EDITION 87 (JANUARY 6) TO EDITION 92 (FEBRUARY 10)

The new year heralded a new era for the paper with *FE Week* deputy editor and chief reporter Chris Henwood taking over from edition 87 (January 6).

The paper revealed in edition 88 (January 13) that South London college Lesoco had crashed to a grade four Ofsted rating and in edition 91 (February 3), it was reported that the Skills Funding Agency (SFA) had published a list of 1,477 Qualification



and Credit Framework (QCF) level two to four qualifications it said would not be approved for funding in 2014/15.

It was revealed in edition 92 (February 10) that Jobcentre Plus (JCP) advisers had been told not to direct 18 and 19-year-olds to the government's flagship traineeship scheme because it would put their benefits at risk.



## EDITION 93 (FEBRUARY 24) TO EDITION 98 (MARCH 31):

The paper reported in its first edition after the half-term break (February 24) that the government was launching a consultation on plans to launch new post-19 outcome-based performance measures for FE.

Then *FE Week* dedicated a supplement (February 28) to National Apprenticeship Week 2014.

Edition 94 (March 3) told how Warwickshire-based provider Bright Assessing had been ordered to stop running qualifications by awarding organisation NCFE after it investigated allegations of malpractice (March 3).

The paper reported in edition 96 (March 17) that then-Skills Minister Matthew Hancock had told providers that colleges facing a funding rate cut for their full-time 18-year-old learners would be protected from the move

inflicting more than 2 per cent damage to budgets.

Edition 98 (March 31) covered how there had been just 3,300 traineeship starts in the six months following the launch of the scheme, which was described by then-Shadow Junior Education Minister Rushanara Ali as "deeply disappointing".



Former Skills Minister Matthew Hancock

## EDITION 99 (APRIL 21) TO EDITION 103 (MAY 19):

Edition 99 (April 21) reported on calls for college chief executive pay levels to be published alongside those of principals.

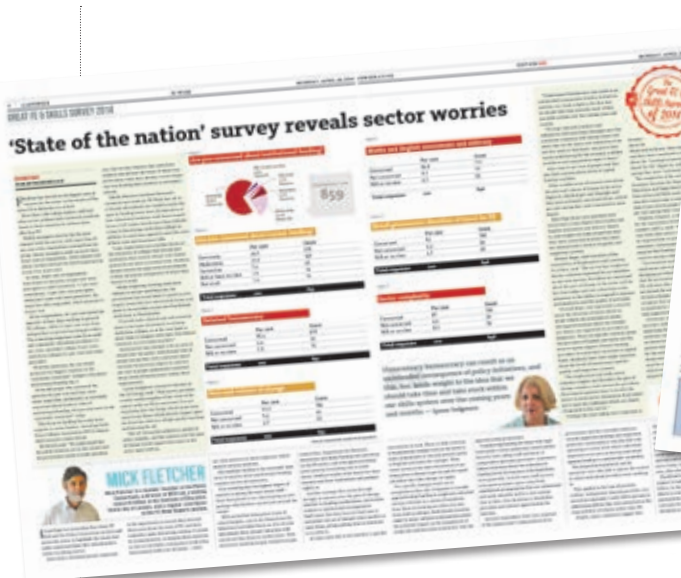
A new logo and redesign for the paper was unveiled for edition 100 (April 28), which carried the results of The Great FE & Skills Survey of 2014. The Policy Consortium and *FE Week* polled more than 1,000 college leaders, staff and other sector professionals, who revealed their biggest concern was the future of funding. Edition 101 (May 5)



exclusively revealed that the results of FE Commissioner Dr David Collins' inspections of failing colleges would be made public.

Then, edition 103 (May 19) reported that Dr Collins had collected his first scalp, after it was announced Lesoco principal Maxine Room was standing down. It followed criticism by Dr

Collins of the college's leadership and governance.



FE Commissioner Dr David Collins



# Minister and FE Week — a review of 2014

## EDITION 104 (JUNE 2) TO EDITION 108 (JUNE 30):



UCU members at Lambeth College on strike

The paper reported in edition 104 (June 2) on Lambeth College principal Mark Silverman's reaction to the announcement that staff would take part in an "indefinite strike" over contract changes from June 3. The strike ended on July 9.

The results of an *FE Week* investigation into multi-million pound funding of Gazelle by UK colleges was published in edition 107 (June 23). It provoked criticism of public money being used on "expensive initiatives which have little educational impact".

Edition 108 revealed that the number of potential fraud cases referred

to the SFA had more than doubled between 2012-13 and 2013-14. There were 108 new allegations in 2013-14 and 52 the previous financial year.

The paper went global with a supplement (June 27) on the first world-class apprenticeships study tour organised by the International Skills Standards Organisation.

Reporter Freddie Whittaker followed delegates across America and Canada, reporting on success stories and issues faced by their apprenticeship schemes.



## EDITION 109 (SEPTEMBER 8) TO EDITION 115 (OCTOBER 20):

After the summer holidays, *FE Week* reported in edition 109 (September 8) that the Department for Education (DfE) had told providers not to top-up new free meals allocations — after it emerged that a number of colleges wanted to boost the £2.41 hand-outs to as much as £5 with Bursary Fund cash.

Edition 111 (September 22) then reported on sector dismay after the DfE made a U-turn and announced that top-ups would be allowed after all.

The same edition also exclusively revealed that a number of University Technical Colleges were running at around 10 per cent capacity last academic year.

In edition 112 (September 29), *FE Week* reported £290k was spent on rebranding Lewisham and Southwark colleges as Lesoco

after they merged in 2012 — yet governors were now looking at dumping the name.

Then *FE Week* published its first in-depth interview in edition 113 (October 6) with Skills Minister Nick Boles (following his appointment on July 15), where he backed a review of Functional Skills.

The paper also covered new ground by attending the Conservative, Labour and Liberal Democrat party conferences and reporting on them in a supplement (October 10).



Skills Minister Nick Boles



## EDITION 116 (NOVEMBER 3) TO EDITION 122 (DECEMBER 15):

The future of the SFA was called into question in edition 116 (November 3) following the announcement that Education Funding Agency chief Peter Lauener would take on the running of both bodies.

The paper dedicated a supplement (November 17) to coverage of The Skills Show 2014 at The Birmingham NEC.

The *FE Week* team then produced edition 119 (November 24) from a 22nd floor suite at Birmingham's Hyatt hotel, while covering the Association of Colleges annual conference at the neighbouring International Convention Centre.

The front page reported Dr Collins'



call for change at Ofsted after it rated Midland-based Bournville College's leadership outstanding despite a "critical cash position".

Edition 120 (December 1) reported that there had been a 13.7 per cent fall in all-age apprenticeship starts, which were at 440,400 last academic year, having been at 510,200 the previous year, and 520,600 in 2011/12.



## Top 10 fewweek.co.uk stories

**1. Colleges under fire over Gazelle's £3.5m (June 20, 13,367 hits)** — An *FE Week* investigation into funding of Gazelle by UK colleges provoked criticism that public money was being spent on an unproven organisation

**2. College principal takes 'temporary leave of absence' as chair of governors becomes interim chief (June 27, 10,789 hits)** — Warwickshire College principal Mariane Cavalli had, it was announced, taken a "temporary leave of absence" and would be replaced on an interim basis by chair of governors Sue Georgious. This story only appeared online, as it broke the day after edition 108 went to press

**3. Bright Assessing loses third and final appeal stage after 'malpractice' was found — (May 16, 8,990 hits)**: Awarding organisation NCFE detailed evidence of alleged malpractice at Bright Assessing uncovered through an investigation. This story only appeared online, as it broke the day

after edition 103 went to press

**4. Who will certificate Bright? (May 8, 7,865 hits)** — Awarding organisations OCR and Ascentis followed NCFE in cutting ties with Bright Assessing

**5. Leading London college tumbles to inadequate — (January 9, 6,913 hits)** — Lesoco was graded inadequate by Ofsted

**6. Shock funding cut for 1,500 adult quals (January 31, 6,228 hits)** — The Skills Funding Agency announced that as many as 1,500 qualifications faced the public funding axe as it looked to introduce a 15-credit threshold

**7. Twitter row principal calls off CEO move (May 16, 5,890 hits)** — Basingstoke College of Technology principal Anthony Bravo had signed up to take on the chief executive job at Bradford College Group, but withdrew having apologised on Twitter for

retweeting an offensive message

**8. Reforms signal 'death' of teen apprenticeships (March 7, 5,467 hits)** — Leading sector figures warned an "enforced" employer's fee for 16 and 17-year-old apprenticeships under government funding reforms could spell the end of the programme

**9. EXCLUSIVE: BIS to go public with commissioner's failing college judgments (May 1, 5,089 hits)** — Reporter Rebecca Cooney revealed that the results of FE Commissioner David Collins' inspections of failing colleges would be made public

**10. Apprentice minimum wage to rise to £2.73 an-hour (March 12, 4,768 hits)** — It was announced by the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills that the National Minimum Wage for apprentices would rise by 5p an-hour to £2.73. This specific story surrounding the rise appeared only online



# Not time for blame over reclaim shame

While it's hard to imagine too many SFA emails and letters leaving FE and skills staff with a warm, fuzzy glow, it's even harder to imagine they could have been expecting the bombshell that came from Una Bennett before Christmas.

MIS managers up and down the country, who are no strangers to wanting to tear their hair out over SFA systems, will have gone into the festive period dreading the conversation with their principal or managing director in which they reveal their final funding submissions contained errors.

Their bosses could not have known that more than 700 providers — well over 50 per cent of all SFA-contracted colleges and independent learning providers — had also received Ms Bennett's letter warning that money would have to be given back.

But with so many affected, it seems unlikely the fault lies with provider staff. However, this is not the time for blame.

Now is the time to ask why this problem was discovered so late — even after the SFA's own auditors had given sign-off.

It is also the time to ask why there is so much uncertainty surrounding what the errors were, not to mention how much money the SFA will be taking back.

Presumably different SFA auditors will be signing off the amounts it will be looking to reclaim.

**Chris Henwood**  
chris.henwood@feweek.co.uk

TOP ED COMMITTEE CAREERS TWEETS

- @ssat: NM thinks it is important to begin careers advice early. By the age of 14 it can be too late #edselctte
- @tonyparkin: Bizarre moment as SoS seems to accept she doesn't have plan for careers guidance, justified by her on reducing workload argument #edselctte
- @careerslr: Dominic Raab - Despite stat duty of impartial advice, #edselctte sees 'lingering snobbery' to vocational route vs academic?
- @careersalliance: #edselctte @grahamstuart says No1 issue is lack of incentives & accountability 4 schools/ colleges to have effective #CEIAG. Resources needed
- @CareersDefender: @NickyMorgan01 says she has seen "enormous willingness" to take this on #careers #edselctte @CommonsEd" where?



# Certification pledge amid Sfl closure

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Providers have been given assurances that logistics apprenticeships will continue to be certificated after the industry's Sector Skills Council (SSC) announced it was closing.

More than 30 jobs are thought to be at risk after the board of directors at Skills for Logistics (SfL), one of 18 SSCs in the UK, announced on Tuesday (January 6) that it was closing, and was considering administration.

A spokesperson for the Milton Keynes-based charity said it had happened "due to pressure placed on the business by the trustees of the pension scheme, which SfL joined following its initial set-up in 2003".

The Federation for Industry Sector Skills and Standards (FISSS) assured providers of apprenticeships certificated by SfL that they would not be affected.

Mark Froud, FISSS managing director, told *FE Week*: "In the short-term, FISSS will with immediate affect take responsibility for the certification service for apprenticeships in the logistics sector. SfL certificated around 7,000

apprenticeships in the last 12 months."

He added: "In the long run, we are working with the UK Commission for Employment and Skills [UKCES] and the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills to find a replacement organisation to manage both the issuing authority duties and certification duties. Providers shouldn't notice any decline in quality or speed of service."

SfL's annual accounts in March last year showed it had an income of £3.6m and 34 full-time-equivalent staff. They also showed that as of March 2010 there was a £1.5m black hole in the "defined benefit" pension scheme, established in 2003 with the ITB Pension Funds Open Fund. Three years later that had been reduced by £300,000. SfL had paid more than £200,000 annually towards the deficit in the two years leading up to publication of the accounts.

The SfL spokesperson said: "Like many similar organisations, the significant pension deficit and subsequent on-going recovery payments has placed extreme pressure on a smaller SfL business in a rapidly changing economic environment.

"We have worked hard to exist and be effective over the last two to three years in the 'new world' of substantially reduced public funding.

"However, given the reduced activity level in 2015 and obligations to the pension scheme, the board felt it would be better to seek alternative options for the continuing industry skills projects."

The accounts also revealed SfL received £4m funding from UKCES for 2013-14 and beyond.

A UKCES spokesperson declined to comment on whether it hoped to retrieve any funding.

However, he said: "We are aware the board of SfL has taken the decision to close and is appointing an administrator.

"This is clearly worrying news for staff and their families, and our thoughts are with them. We will wish to work with the administrator and the industry to ensure continuity of work on standards and apprenticeship certification."

The ITB Pension Funds Open Fund declined to comment.

## COMMENTS

**Apprenticeship pay survey report released**

The Living Wage is £7.85/hr for the UK and £9.15 an-hour in London. The introduction of the apprentice minimum wage by the Coalition at a rate well below this was bad enough, that it is currently £2.73 manages to be both farcical and offensive.

That people are not even paid this is disgusting.

If the government was really interested, minimum wage rates and in-depth teaching about employment rights would be part of the curriculum.

James Beecher

**BIS response to select committee's adult maths and English inquiry recognises 'urgency of situation'**

Functional Skills in literacy and numeracy

are hugely popular for both unemployed and employed adults.

We could easily deliver twice our volume of provision and, at 97% success rates and high praise by Ofsted, we are well placed to do so.

However, four growth cases from TQ for this provision were declined in 2013/14 and, as our growth case for Q1 in 2014/15 for apprenticeships had only limited success and does not meet demand, we will be moving much needed funding across from Functional Skills to Apprenticeships.

Our experience shows that there is not sufficient funding to meet the need to bring all adult learners up to Level 2 in literacy and numeracy.

Mike Motley

**Cable concession on 'two million' apprentice claims**

This is blatantly obvious to all involved in Apprenticeship delivery over the years. It's a headline figure, should be seen as such. Then should be followed by a breakdown across levels, progression, multiple starts, completion (overall and timely), ages etc.

Take it as a headline only, the same would apply to politicians of all parties.

Dauids Neal

**JCP traineeship 'target' after 'concerns scheme extends benefit claims'**

I thought we'd won this battle last year when the 16-hour rule was belatedly dropped. How naive!!

Peter Cobrin



# 'Extraordinary' former vice principal dies, aged 68

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A former London college vice-principal described by ex-colleagues as "a woman of extraordinary energy and judgement" has died aged 68.

Tributes poured in from ex-colleagues of Ruth Nixon (pictured), who was assistant principal and vice-principal of Lambeth College between 1994 and 2010.

She died peacefully following a sudden illness on January 2.

In a joint statement, Adrian Perry, the college's principal from 1992 to 2002, and Dame Lorna Boreland-Kelly, college chair of governors from 1992 to 2013, said: "Ruth Nixon was a woman of extraordinary energy and judgement.

"As assistant principal and then vice principal, she established robust [teaching] systems that radically raised pass rates and reduced drop-out. Because of her work, many more students gained qualifications and moved into employment and higher education."

Mrs Nixon, who lived in Blackheath, London, and is survived by her husband

and two sons, first entered the FE workforce teaching English as a Second Language (ESL) at Cheetham FE Centre, Manchester, from 1971 to 1972. She taught ESL and literacy at Bradford College, Manchester University, Sheppey School, in Kent, and South East London Technical College (SELTEC) over the next 15 years.

Mrs Nixon was appointed deputy head of humanities in 1987 at South London College, which merged with Vauxhall College and Brixton College of Further Education to form Lambeth College five years later.

Richard Chambers, who was the college's principal from 2005 to 2011, said she was an "unsung hero".

"Ruth's unassuming quiet nature was the mark of a selflessness which made her such a great public servant and educationalist," he said.

"She was a central part

of hugely pioneering bunch of colleagues leading curriculum reform to make colleges more suitable places for people with modest educational achievements from their schooling."

Visit [www.feweek.co.uk](http://www.feweek.co.uk) for this article carrying more of the tributes.



## Land agreed for HS2 college

Plans for one of two high speed rail national college campuses are a step closer to fruition after Doncaster City Council donated land for the project.

The council's cabinet agreed on Wednesday (January 7) to offer the 5.1-acre Carolina Way site as its contribution to the project, one of the first to be announced under the government's national colleges programme.

Along with a headquarters in Birmingham, the college campus in Doncaster will train apprentices and other learners for the HS2 rail development, which will see journey times between London and northern cities cut.

Mayor of Doncaster Ros Jones said: "We fought hard to bring the national high speed

rail college to Doncaster and it will be one of the most important investments in the borough for many years, providing fantastic opportunities for local people to secure highly skilled, well-paid engineering and manufacturing jobs."

The council said that as well as being involved in shaping the college and its curriculum, it would project manage the construction of the campus, which is expected to start in 2017.

Other national colleges are due to be established to train people for the nuclear, fracking, digital skills, advanced manufacturing, wind energy and creative and cultural industries.

## DfE overtime payments up 40pc

Department for Education (DfE) overtime payments rocketed by nearly 40 per cent between September and November, it has been revealed.

According to workforce management information published by the DfE, overtime payments for the period went from £37,437 to £51,729. It comes after the DfE's overall full-time equivalent (FTE) staff numbers fell to 2,187 in November, down from 2,298 in the same period in 2013.

It also follows a reduction in spending by the DfE on agency staff — from £341,739 in August to £254,945 in November — and consultants, which fell from more than £280,000 in

September to £66,112 in November.

Kathy Prendiville, an industrial officer with the PCS union, said: "It is hardly surprising that, having cut the department by nearly 50 per cent over the last four years, we find overtime increasing.

"This, alongside consultancy and agency costs, which are still too high, merely masks what is essentially an under-resourced department, all in the name of austerity."

A DfE spokesperson said: "Since 2010, we have delivered huge savings for the taxpayer, reducing administration costs by £120m a year. Staff numbers have fallen by 40 per cent over the same period."

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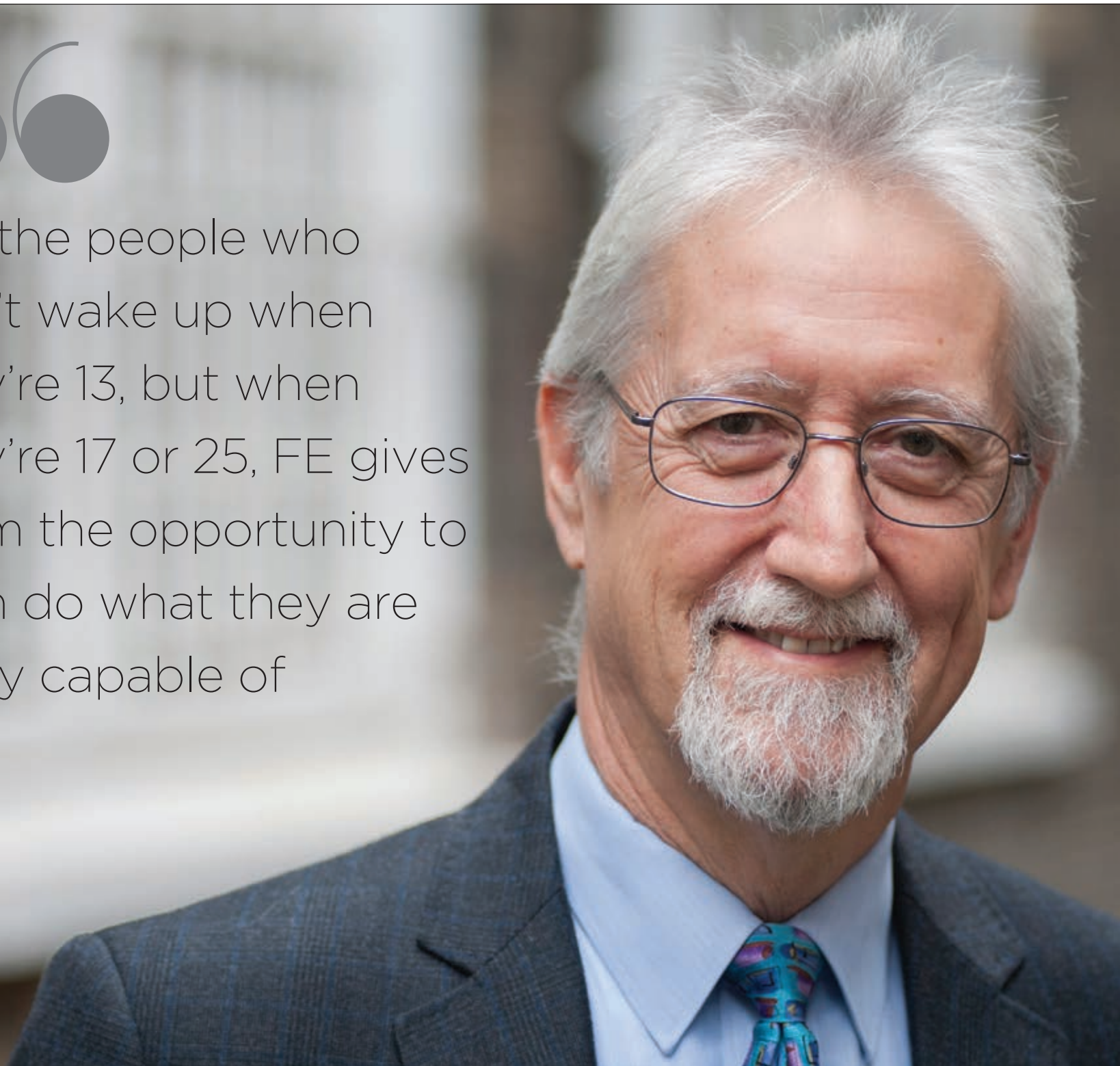




## PROFILE



For the people who don't wake up when they're 13, but when they're 17 or 25, FE gives them the opportunity to then do what they are really capable of



## KEEPING A FOOT ON THE GAS IN (SEMI) RE

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In these cash-strapped times, many principals would like to shave a few pounds off the expenditure column of their college finances.

And it was no different during the time of incorporation, back in 1992, when a fortuitous boundary decision benefited Martin Ward, as principal of Hull's Wyke Sixth Form College.

It resulted in bills going to a neighbouring school — an outcome he must look back on enviously today now that he keeps his eye on finances at Leicester College as its governors' board chair.

"The college [Wyke] was on the same site as a secondary school, and there never had been a boundary between the two, so we had to decide on one," he says.

"Years later we discovered the council was still paying our gas bill because there never had been a separate gas meter."

The role at Leicester marks somewhat of

a homecoming for 64-year-old Mr Ward, who is also Association of School and College Leaders (ASCL) public affairs director, having been born in the upstairs room of the city's George and Dragon pub. It was run by his mum, Doris, and dad Cecil, who was killed in a motorbike accident when Ward was just 13.

"I never knew him after I grew up, and I never appreciated him at the time — you don't when you're a teenager," says Ward.

He adds it's "hard to know" whether the tragedy impacted on his school progress.

"I barely know what that 13-year-old was like now, even though there are some things still in my head that are parts of him," he says.

"So it's possible that helped me to think I could do right by my dad."

Ward adds: "I sort of woke up when I was about 13. People 'wake up' at different stages in their childhood, depending on who they are and what happens to them — in my case, I was pootling along, not doing very much, and

when I got to what we now call Year 8, I found I was in the top maths set.

"And I thought, 'oh, blimey — I must be quite clever really' and I never looked back after that."

His love of mathematics led him to study at Warwick University and on to teaching maths.

He chose teaching because "I liked talking, I liked the sound of my own voice" and found himself drawn to FE.

"I realised that for the people who don't wake up when they're 13, but when they're 17 or 25, it gives them the opportunity to then do what they are really capable of," he says.

"That's got to be a good thing, hasn't it?"

After working his way up to head of department at Queen Mary's Sixth Form College, in Basingstoke, and a stint as deputy principal at New College Telford, in 1986 he landed the job as founding principal of Wyke College and oversaw its development from the very beginning.

"I was very young to be a principal at 35,

and they made a brave choice," he says.

"We were given the luxury of two years' preparation time to develop the college, oversee building work and appoint staff.

"It was a very daunting task. Certainly there were days when I thought if I overlook something really critical we're going to need on day one it's going to be very embarrassing — you know, what if there's no chalk to write on the blackboards?"

Despite this, he says, the project was "really exciting".

"It's just such a privilege to be able to open something new, draw all the policies and procedures from the ground up," he says.

"And it proved to be very successful."

However, his time at Wyke came to a tragic end following the death in 1999 of Mary, his wife of 29 years, after complications from coeliac disease — a gluten intolerance that is not usually fatal.

"I was at work on Friday morning, I got a call from our cleaner saying I must go home as Mary had collapsed," says Ward.





# ETIREMENT

“I took her into hospital and thought, ‘they’ll sort this out’.

“They called me at five the following morning to say I must come in and just when I got there she had died.

“The worst thing I ever had to do was ring her father — because you don’t expect your children to die.”

The two years that followed, were, says Ward, “a very dark period”.

“My wonderful vice-principals had to run the college for quite a long period while my head was somewhere else. I was in a very deep depression, I now realise, looking back,” he explains.

He devoted himself to looking after his and Mary’s sons, Edmund, then aged 17, and Michael, then 15.

When he emerged from depression in 2001, he decided it was time for a change.

“Because with the best will in the world, you become a drag on the institution if you stay too long as principal and I felt I really needed to move,” he says.

It's a personal thing

**What is your favourite book, and why?**

The Name of the Rose Umberto Eco. It started the craze for historical whodunnits. It’s set in the 14th century in a monastery and the hero is both very clever and rational, and humane — and therefore someone I’d very much like to be

**What do you do to switch off from work?**

Cooking. It’s something I came to in later life as it were, and I spent a lot of time trying to do it right — and of course the beauty of cooking is that you get to eat the product and I very much like eating

**What’s your pet hate?**

Putting people down because they’re different from you. You get that in so many different contexts and forms and it’s often in the popular press. It’s something that certain political parties are pushing very hard at the moment and it’s something that affects the FE sector because it’s different from most of the backgrounds of people making the decisions in Whitehall that are affecting the sector

**If you could invite anyone to a dinner party, living or dead, who would it be?**

I was tempted to say Socrates, Jesus, Mohammad and Buddha, but thinking about it what I’d really like would be my mum and my dad and my two brothers and all my dear friends who have died all together and tell them I love them one more time

**What did you want to be when you grew up?**

I wanted to be grown up. That was it, I’m afraid. No great aspiration to do anything

Ward and wife Jo with John Lennon’s statue in Havana 2012



Ward and first wife Mary in Tunisia 1976



Ward graduating from the University of Warwick in 1972



From left: Ward’s mother Doris, brother Peter, father Cecil with Ward at the front 1962

“I didn’t see the point of running another college just like it, where I hadn’t had the opportunity to open and appoint the staff and so forth — where’s the joy in that?”

Ward was already on the council of what was then known as the Secondary Heads Association, and when the job of deputy general secretary came up.

One of the first changes Ward made to the organisation, along with then-general secretary John Dunford, was to change the name to ASCL.

“The name change opened it up a bit more,” he says.

“And I have always had that role in the organisation — saying, ‘and colleges, don’t forget them’.”

In 2002, Ward married old friend Jo, who had two sons of her own — Robert, a year younger than Edmund, and Jon, a year younger than Michael.

“I’ve had the very good fortune to have been married to two wonderful women,” he says.

“Jo’s had the better of me, there’s no doubt

about it. I’m a better, more emotionally intelligent person now than I was before — which is not saying a lot, and Jo has really taught me how to enjoy myself, which I had never really got the hang of before. I never really understood that it was all right to really fully enjoy yourself.”

Ward certainly seems to have fully bounced back — he waxes lyrical about both Leicester College and ASCL — so much so that it would be fair to say he’s had some difficulty in retiring.

In 2011 he stepped into “semi-retirement”, moving over into the ASCL public affairs role.

“I was going to stop this summer, then it was going to be next summer, when I’ll be 65,” he says.

“And now I’m going on until 2016, but then I think I really, really have to stop, because there are so many other things I want to do — notably, a lot more travelling than one can fit in with having even half-time work.”

Ward has spent much of his career in sixth form colleges – a type of college that is now

seemingly being passed over by government policy in favour of free schools — but he’s optimistic about their future.

“It’s one of these policy drifts that happens,” he says.

“The minister says we’ve got this problem, so let’s open some free schools, but then that becomes an aim in itself — and never mind how you do it or whether it’s actually the right thing to do, because the minister has spoken.

“Will it make any difference whether it’s nominally a school or nominally a college? I think probably not.

“They’re all going to be free-standing institutions with their own governance arrangements and their own lack of funding.

“In 10 years’ time some of these free schools that have opened as sixth form schools will just be sixth form colleges and will be indistinguishable from the ones we’ve had for the last 20 or 30 years, others will have gone bust and disappeared or sort of taken over by the FE college next door.”





## THE INDY SCENE

**John Hyde is the chairman of HIT Training, a hospitality training provider that operates across England, and on the second Monday of every month he writes in *FE Week* about issues affecting independent learning providers**

I arrived back in Britain on Tuesday after three weeks' magnificent customer service in the United States and the Caribbean.

Unfortunately, thanks to BA, my luggage remained in Philadelphia. And I soon knew I was back in the UK by the 'jobsworth' at Heathrow who handled my missing luggage claim.

She tried to persuade me that it was my fault my luggage had not made it back, and couldn't bring herself to offer an explanation, apology or any idea when it might be returned.

## To let National Occupational Standards disappear seems a national scandal and enormous waste of resources and money to me

In my experience, customer service is improving in this country generally given a huge boost by the 'volunteers' at the Olympics. It needs to be sustained and nurtured if we are to grow our tourism and hospitality business.

It is not surprising that customer service is the single largest apprenticeship qualification, demonstrating the importance employers put on these skills in a variety of public and private sectors to grow their businesses by delivering excellent customer relations.

VisitBritain estimates that inbound tourism will increase by 4.5 per cent this year to £22.2bn — that's almost a million more than 2014.

Culture Secretary Sajid Javid said tourism was now a major driver of economic growth for Britain.

At the start of the New Year it's time again for resolutions, not revolutions. My plea for this year is no changes to apprenticeship rules and regulations until the election is over and our new political masters impose their apprenticeship dreams — or from some of the parties' proposals, their nightmares — upon us.

The sector needs to ensure the political parties understand the consequences of their manifesto proposals.

We do not need to repeat the apprenticeship loan debacle, which decimated level three and above apprenticeships until it was rescinded.

Currently, apprenticeship numbers are beginning to decline as employers vote with their feet against managing the funding and mandatory cash payments and potential apprentices and parents baulk at an apprenticeship without a recognised qualification.

I've been abroad for the past three weeks and had several informal discussions with employers and entrepreneurs from the United States, Caribbean and South America about their respective staff training and development.

It surprised me how complimentary and knowledgeable they were about our apprenticeship programmes in England.

This mirrors the international remarks made at November's National Vocational Education and Training Conference at the Skills Show and the results of the latest Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) employer and learner satisfaction surveys of apprenticeships.

My main concern is the apprenticeship development we have pulled together over the years, culminating with the Specification of Apprenticeship Standards for England (Sase) being thrown out with the bath water because a few disgruntled employers complained to Doug Richard and former Skills Minister Matthew Hancock wanted to make a name for himself.

If our current Skills Minister, Nick Bowles, is to be believed in saying he sees the Trailblazers as a pilot and not 'early adopters' then presumably there will be some analysis of the Trailblazer standards compared with the current National Occupational Standards (NOS).

From what I have seen, most of the Trailblazers have borrowed heavily from the NOS, so unless they show a significant improvement there seems little reason to change. Especially when the NOS are national, co-ordinated, cover all sectors with a single assessment strategy and are respected internationally, particularly by countries introducing work experience and work-place learning.

To let NOS disappear seems a national scandal and enormous waste of resources and money to me.

The final end test for the professional cookery Trailblazer will take two days and cost £2,000 to stage for each apprentice.

It will only test the apprentice's ability to cook a variety of dishes in an examination environment, cooking one portion of each dish at a time and not their ability to perform in a commercial production environment. Should the apprentice fail their test, it will be for the employer to pay for the re-take. That's bound to improve achievement rates. Don't remember reading about that additional cost to the employer anywhere is BIS briefings.



## LAWRENCE VINCENT

Principal, Bournemouth and Poole College

## Masochism and trust in the board and principal relationship

**Governors bring a wealth of disparate expertise to the board table, but can sometimes fall short when it comes to their college knowledge. Lawrence Vincent provides 10 key questions governors should be armed with at their next meeting with the principal.**

College governing bodies have a responsibility to ensure that the core function of the college — teaching, learning and assessment — is of the highest standard.

How then can college governors discharge this responsibility effectively? With great difficulty, I would argue, without the help of the expert knowledge that sits within the college's senior leadership team.

It is easy for a principal to build 'pseudo trust' with their board by providing carefully controlled data sets that look impressive but give only a surface level view of the effectiveness of teaching and learning.

## Although these questions cause us serious discomfort, they have enhanced my board's understanding of teaching and learning no end

My Bournemouth and Poole College senior leadership team has built enormous trust with our board thanks to a set of questions under the heading 'The 10 difficult questions no principal wants to be asked.'

This is, I accept, a masochistic approach to building trust and although these questions cause us serious discomfort, they have enhanced my board's understanding of teaching and learning no end.

Firstly, how many students dropped out before Day 43, from which areas and why?

This question moves the discussion away from a glib set of standard answers and opens up a more fruitful line of enquiry. For example, is there a correlation between late enrolments and drop-outs? Are some areas of the college more aberrant than others and does this suggest sloppy interview and induction practices? Is there a culture of pressure to achieve enrolment targets that is then corrupting the integrity of student recruitment?

Secondly, how many 16 to 18-year-olds enrolled without maths and/or English grade

C and what percentage of these are currently in maths/English classes?

The speed in which students who need maths and English are identified and put in classes reveals crucial information about whole college understanding and support of the maths and English policy and the initial assessment process.

Thirdly, what are student attendance rates for maths and English classes?

Whole college attendance figures do not reveal that attendance at maths/English classes is nearly always lower. This question separates the data and gives way to establishing what is being done to drive up maths and English attendance.

Fourthly, what is the lesson observation profile for all maths and English classes?

Again, whole college analysis of lesson observation grades often disguises the weaker profile in maths and English classes.

Fifthly, what is the lesson observation profile for all new teachers in their first year?

Support for new teachers is often weak. By concentrating on them as a distinctive group, wider questions can be asked about the whole college approach to supporting new teachers. This includes ensuring poor performers do not drift through their probationary period.

Sixthly, and for the same reasons, how many new teachers are there and how are they supported?

Seven, how many teachers at any one time are being formally disciplined/performance managed? How long is each case taking and why?

This question demands hard evidence that poorly-performing teachers are being carefully managed and light thrown on the amount of time this is taking.

Eight, which 10 full-time courses have the weakest student progression statistics and what is being done about it?

This moves the scrutiny away from a sole focus on success rates and generates interest in progression rates as a measure of effectiveness. It throws up some very interesting and uncomfortable 'why are we offering this course' conversations.

Nine, what percentage of full time 16 to 18 students have undertaken a work placement?

This is rarely looked at but is key within the new study programmes. This creates a whole college view of work experience and often reveals highly inconsistent practice.

And finally, how does the internal lesson observation profile compare with externally-validated lesson observations?

Internal lesson observation profiles are often dangerously inflated. College boards need to know that leadership teams are not fooling themselves. Scrutiny here forces external validation of lesson observations and allows valuable comparison.





# **FE Week Annual Apprenticeship Conference and Exhibition 2015**

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**Supporting apprenticeship providers during a time of major reform**

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Deputy Director, Joint Apprenticeships Unit, Department for business, Innovation and Skills/DFE



**NICK LINFORD**

Director of LSECT Ltd, former editor of FE Week



**SUE HUSBAND**

Director of the National Apprenticeship Service



**NICK BOLES MP**

Minister of State for Skills and Equalities



**STEWART SEGAL**

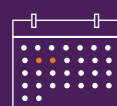
Chief Executive of AELP



**CHARLOTTE BOSWORTH**

Director of Skills & Employment at OC

### **DATE:**



March 9 to 10, 2015

### **VENUE:**



Venue: Queen Elizabeth II Conference Centre, Westminster, London

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Taking place on the first two days of National Apprenticeship Week (March 9 to 10, 2015) and in partnership with the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS), the conference will offer a mixture of key note speeches from Government Ministers and Shadow Cabinet members, to in-depth practical sessions with Nick Linford and other technical specialists.

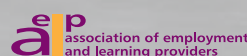
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# CAMPUS ROUND-UP

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## Full steam ahead for charities after mayor's £2k London float win



Learners Ben Leask and Jake Steadman were among Mayor Linda Trew's guests on Havering College's vintage steam train float for London's New Year's Day Parade

Construction students and staff from Havering College of Further and Higher Education have helped The Mayor of Havering raise £2,000 for local charities by building a vintage steam train float. Learners Ben Leask, aged 17, and Jake Steadman, 16, joined Councillor Linda Trew on board the float for London's New Year's Day Parade. The float had the theme 'London On The Move' and was created by more than 50

college students and staff. Havering came sixth place and won £2,000. Its chosen charities were add+up (a support network for people with ADHD), The Alzheimer's Society and mental health charity Mind. Ms Trew said: "The float constructed by the students and staff of Havering College was amazing. Everyone was so impressed by it. "There were a lot of compliments."

## New mentoring scheme launches

Bury College learners have been undertaking specialist training as part of a new peer to peer mentoring project. The new programme means learners will act as mentors to fellow learners to deliver information on a range of issues, including healthy lifestyle. Deane Sergeant, aged 19, is studying a level three extended diploma in IT and is one of the new mentors. "The training we have received for the

mentoring project has been great," he said. "My confidence and listening skills have improved greatly. It will also be great to include on my CV." Student learning mentor Nasreen Ashraf said: "The aim of the project is to equip student volunteers with transferable skills, develop their confidence and gain knowledge in the belief young people are more likely to listen to their peers than adults or professionals."



Bury College mentors with (right, centre) principal Charlie Deane

## On the university trail

Students from Barnsley Sixth Form College visited the University of Hull for a master class in English literature and continued their studies by taking the Philip Larkin Trail. The group of 25 English literature A-level students visited the university and attended a lecture before taking the tour of poet Larkin's Hull, whose most famous work came in 1955 when he wrote 'The Less Deceived'.

Learner Emma Shepherd, aged 18, said: "We have just started coursework on Larkin so it was really relevant to our studies to visit the university, take the Trail and get points and tips from the university Doctors in the master class." Harriet Grant, 17, said: "The Trail was really enjoyable and insightful. It was also great to see the university environment."



From left: Barnsley Sixth Form College students Lucy Bar, aged 20, Daniel Fotheringham, Autumn Faye Sykes, both 18, and Matthew James Ibbotson, 17, with University of Hull academics and Barnsley Sixth Form College personal progress mentor Maria Sutton



From left: Media lecturer Becky Smith, BTec extended diploma in media students Liam O'Hare, Naomi Rogers and Jamie Coupland, all aged 18, and media team leader Rory Mason

## Film festival praise for Cornwall College media production learners

Media students at Cornwall College won four out of five awards at Cornwall Film Festival 2014. Learners from the extended diploma media group collected the awards for best factual, best fiction and best entertainment films while students from the HND media group scooped the Cornwall Film Festival Audience Award. Naomi Rogers and Liam O'Hare study BTec level three extended diploma in

media production. Naomi said: "I'm really proud that our film is a multi-award winning production, it has been a really good year. The film festival awards are the icing on the cake. "I am very proud of our whole group and I'm excited about what the future holds." Liam said: "I think it's pretty impressive that at the age of the 18 we've been able to make a film that has won awards, beating other colleges in Cornwall."



# Rosie powers her way to disability sport ambassador role

A photography student from City College Norwich (CCN) is hoping to fire her wheelchair football team to victory this season, while promoting disability sport in her new role as a college ambassador, writes Billy Camden.

Chelsea football star John Terry has got some serious competition in the form of 16-year-old Rosie Hodgson.

While the former England defender takes to the Stamford Bridge turf to lead the likes of Eden Hazard and Cesc Fabregas, CCN's Rosie is turning heads with her own footballing abilities.

She plays right wing for Watford-based Muscle Warriors in the Wheelchair Football Association (WFA) Championship Division.

And her success in the sport — with her team sitting top of the league having gone 13 matches unbeaten — has resulted in CCN Active, the Sport England-backed programme of sports and activities for all students at CCN, appointing her as a disability sport ambassador.

“At football sometimes I see myself as John Terry because I feel I am big, strong and a powerful leader and I hope I can also do that in my ambassador role,” Chelsea-supporting Rosie told *FE Week*.

Rosie, who is in her first year of an extended diploma in photography, was diagnosed with primary lymphoedema, a chronic swelling of one or more body parts, when she was just five years old. At the age of nine she was forced into a wheelchair when

Rosie Hodgson is hoping to emulate the success of her sporting hero, Chelsea and ex England international defender John Terry (pictured right), as a right winger with Watford-based Muscle Warriors Powerchair Football Club



Pic by: Emily Karn

her pelvis collapsed.

“When I first broke my pelvis I was in a manual wheelchair which really hurt my limbs and particularly my shoulders so getting a powerchair really made a difference,” she said.



PA

Helped by mum Tina and dad Paul, who take time off work to travel all over the country for hospital appointments, Rosie and family drive from Norwich to Watford every week so that she can train with her team.

Little brother Charlie also pitches in to help by keeping his sister company on the journeys.

And off the field, Rosie is also keen to encourage more wheelchair users to get involved in powerchair football — a 4 a-side sport with three outfield players and a goalkeeper on a standard-sized basketball court, with two halves of 20 minutes — and other disability sports.

“Powerchair football is a great sport and it is growing. The more people we can get into it, the better,” said Rosie.

“Since I’ve started wheelchair football, my only regret is not doing it sooner.”

She added: “There are so many opportunities for people with disabilities to get involved in sporting activities, whether they want to do so for enjoyment or to be competitive, including here at the college.”

Appointed by the college’s Sport Maker, Chloe McMorran, because of her “enthusiasm” and “passion”, Rosie has been asked to set up and coach a powerchair football team.

Her role will also see her give speeches and organise student group sessions.

Ms McMorran said: “We are so proud of Rosie and cannot wait for her to start as an ambassador. Her passion and enthusiasm are infectious, she is perfect for the role.”

**DO YOU WANT TO BE IN CAMPUS ROUND-UP?**  
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## & MOVERS SHAKERS

Your weekly guide to who's new and who's leaving

North Hertfordshire College principal Signe Sutherland has revealed she is to retire in March, while her replacement has been announced as Matt Hamnett, a director in Capita's major deals team.

She will be stepping down after nine years at the college having been appointed principal in 2012.

“We are delighted to announce Matt’s appointment, who will take up post when I retire in March 2015,” Ms Sutherland told *FE Week*.

“We conducted an extensive search to find a principal with the expertise, experience and passion for education required to take the college forward and with his experience of government, education and the commercial world, we are confident that Matt will be a huge success.”

A college spokesperson said Mr Hamnett spent eight years as a civil servant in the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills and its predecessors with responsibility

for FE, skills and apprenticeships. During that time he led work on a wide range of different strategy, policy and finance projects.

More recently he spent two and a half years in PwC's strategy practice where, among other client projects, he led the development of the professional services higher apprenticeship working with businesses across the professional services.

“I’ve been hugely impressed by everything I’ve seen of the college so far,” said Mr Hamnett.

“I have met a team that is deeply committed to the task of preparing our students to succeed in the ever-changing world of work, and supporting local businesses in their efforts to improve and grow.

“I have seen an enthusiasm for well-founded innovation that I am incredibly excited to support and develop.

“And I have already been fortunate enough to meet some of the employers with whom



Signe Sutherland



Matt Hamnett



Amanda Melton

the college is delivering fantastic initiatives which benefit both the employers and our students.”

Meanwhile, Lancashire County Council has brought in Nelson and Colne College principal Amanda Melton as interim principal of Lancashire Adult Learning (LAL) after it slumped from an Ofsted grade two rating to inadequate last month.

Ms Melton is set to share her time equally between her posts at Nelson and Colne College — rated outstanding at its last inspection, in 2008 — and LAL, the council’s adult learning service, for the remainder of the academic year.


Ms Melton said: “Despite the outcome of the


recent inspection I think there are strengths to build on and I’m looking forward to working with colleagues across LAL to make the improvements that are needed.”

Steve Hailstone was LAL principal up to April 2013, before being replaced in an acting capacity by his deputy, Joyce Dalton. However, she left at the end of August last year.

Tony Martin, cabinet member for adult and community services at the council, said: “Amanda’s appointment as interim principal is a sign of our commitment to implementing a comprehensive action plan that will pick up everything the inspectors said needed to improve.”







**Assistant Principal** £55-£60k + relocation

*Create your own Canterbury tale*


**I**f you're ready to take the next step in your career and you want to make your mark in a College that's going places, this could be the role for you.

With an income of c£35million, and 10,000 learners, Canterbury College is one of the largest providers of post-16 education in the South East serving the communities of East Kent and beyond. The brand new purpose built FE, commercial, community and HE centres set in the heart of the city are signals of our commitment to becoming one of the best Further Education colleges in the country. Improving the quality of teaching and learning is a key priority and the recent management restructure, which resulted in the creation of the role of Assistant Principal, has helped to give a stronger focus to this vital area of the College's work.

In addition to leading the curriculum development, management and quality improvement agenda for one of the College's three Faculties, as Assistant Principal you will be an integral member of the Senior Management Team with cross-college responsibilities and an active role in strategic discussions and decision making. We are looking for a leader with drive, ambition and self-belief; high aspirations for learners; a track record of inspiring teams to deliver success; significant curriculum management and quality improvement experience; and the ability and credibility to work effectively with a range of partners, both internal and external.

If you recognise yourself from the above and you're keen to make your mark in a progressive, values-driven organisation with a strong team ethic and commitment to professional and career development, we're interested in hearing from you.

Visit [www.canterburyap.co.uk](http://www.canterburyap.co.uk) to find out more or contact Trudy Searle or Mike Galloway on **07791 090141 / 07765 595758**. Closing date: 30 January. Initial interviews: week beginning 9 February. Final interviews: 25/26 February.





**YMCA Training is a national charity who aims to transform the lives of young people and adults through work related training and employment support. We believe in setting inspiring goals and working closely with individuals all over the UK to develop personal, vocation and work-related skills.**

#### Area Leader (Central London)

YMCA Fit, one of the UK's leading training providers specialising in qualifications for the fitness industry, are seeking to recruit an experienced Area Leader to manage the YMCA Fit training provision nationally.

Based out of the Central YMCA head office in Central London the Area Leader will be responsible for the management of six departments including tutors, quality assurance, guidance assessors, learning support and project management and will work with each of these departments to ensure that the training delivered is 'gold standard', fit for purpose and meets the needs of the industry. You will need to be commercially focused with the drive and passion to deliver exceptional business results, ensuring the training centres deliver outstanding programmes of teaching, learning and assessment and achieve high, timely success rates. The primary objective is to deliver financial management, learner and quality assurance success rates for the YMCA Fit training provision.

#### Quality Improvement Practitioner (North West/ North East/ South)

We are looking for passionate and dedicated Quality Improvement Practitioners based regionally to drive forward outstanding programmes of teaching, learning and assessment that meet the needs of our learners. You will support all staff to deliver excellence in every part of the learner journey, co-ordinate and deliver the internal quality assurance programme, offer a programme of continuous improvement as well as maintain records and reports. This is a rewarding and target driven environment, where we seek candidates with a proven track record of developing others as well as possessing the V1 or equivalent qualification.

#### Internal Quality Assurer (North West (ft)/ South (ft)/ East Anglia (pt))

We are looking for commercially minded Internal Quality Assurers based regionally to support training staff to deliver outstanding programmes of teaching, learning and assessment that meet the needs of our learners. You will drive forward improvements and support all delivery staff to deliver excellence in every part of the learner journey. To meet the individual and team training and development needs of staff you will help to identify, plan, co-ordinate and deliver a programme of continuous professional development and quality monitoring meetings. You will also regularly maintain effective quality assurance and audit systems. You will have had prior experience of carrying out sampling of learner work and be V1 qualified or equivalent.

#### Senior Business Manager (Warrington & Chester/ Oldham/ Eastbourne/ Hove/ London & Welwyn/ Lowestoft & Norwich)

We are looking for proactive and commercially focused Senior Business Managers to manage the day to day operation of multiple YMCA training centres that deliver training, supported teaching and learning across the UK. Responsible for maintaining and delivering learner numbers, accreditations, revenue targets, quality and performance, you will also proactively coach, mentor and lead the Training Advisors to achieve these goals. As Senior Business Manager you will be responsible for ensuring the training centres provide a service of excellence, a positive learner journey and drive for Grade 1 Ofsted. You will also be required to maximise profit and grow the centre and it's offering by securing local business opportunities, new funding and placements for the centre.

**We offer a competitive basic salary plus benefits.**

ResourceBank are a trusted recruitment service provider for YMCA and are currently supporting the business on the recruitment for their YMCA Training vacancies across the UK. We have a dedicated YMCA recruitment team who will individually manage your application through the recruitment process.





# MIS Consultants

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FE Associates is the leading choice for colleges requiring interim management and consultancy support. Our experienced team of MIS and IT full-time employed consultants and self-employed associate consultants have an impressive range of specialist skills in data analysis and interpretation.

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You will need to be prepared to travel around the UK and stay away from home when required. In return you will receive a competitive base salary, plus a range of benefits including a contributory pension and performance related pay.

For an informal chat, please call Mike Craddock on 01823 337655

To apply please send your CV with covering letter to recruitment@feassociates.com

Closing date for applications is Friday 30th January



## Operations Manager

Full-time, permanent based in Mansfield, Notts.  
Salary c. £35000 per annum plus pension and healthcare scheme (following qualifying period)



We are looking for an experienced Operations/Contracts Manager to lead our small team and to manage the delivery of our SFA ASB contract with a focus on meeting the milestones of the contract and ensuring the compliance and quality of the provision. Working with the CEO and board you will contribute to the strategic aims of NTN and also have the experience to act as our Ofsted Nominee. You will have held a similar position with a training provider with current knowledge of contracts and the sector and be qualified to a minimum of level 5 in a suitable discipline.

This is an exciting role with potential for career progression for the right candidate. For more information and an application pack please contact Sara Harris on 01623 404341 or email sara@ntn-wbl.org.uk.  
Closing date 23 January 2015

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# Assistant Principal – Various Positions

£58,000 - £65,000 dependent on experience + benefits



Over the past two years The Manchester College has been on an unprecedented journey to realign its objectives and raise standards and expectations to meet the needs of students and employers across the Manchester region. The College is now well placed to deliver against its objectives of supporting one of the fastest growing cities in Europe, with a broader national agenda, although there is still much to do on the road to becoming an outstanding College. To help deliver this agenda they are now seeking to appoint a number of Assistant Principals to key roles across the College to drive forward the next stage in its development.

You will lead on shaping the strategic and operational development for your curriculum/functional area to deliver outstanding results for learners. As an active member of the senior leadership team you will provide clear line management across a large and diverse environment with direct responsibility for Heads of Department whilst exceeding stretching targets across recruitment, success, retention, achievement, attendance and income generation. The posts to which we are seeking to appoint include; **AP – Communities & Work; AP – Construction & Engineering; AP – Performing Arts; AP - English & Maths; AP – Student Experience; and AP – Supported Learning.**

As a successful Assistant Principal or Head of Department, you will have an impressive track record of success gained within an exceptional FE institution, with a profound understanding of the challenges facing the sector, as well as a clear view on how to develop a College capable of matching future demands. You will be an innovative

leader with a passion for quality and service excellence, who can demonstrate the capacity to influence, inform and raise the bar so others will follow. Additionally, you will possess outstanding interpersonal and communication skills, being able to engage and influence at all levels across a diverse organisation to solve complex strategic challenges through tangible solutions.

This is a unique opportunity with one of the country's largest and most progressive colleges that sits at the very heart of the devolution agenda across Greater Manchester. The Manchester College will afford the right candidates exceptional opportunities for career progression and development, set within a truly diverse group structure. The sector is changing rapidly, perhaps it's time you made that change?

For more information on this role and how to apply, please visit our website at [www.wickland-westcott.co.uk](http://www.wickland-westcott.co.uk) and view your chosen role on our Current Positions page. For a confidential discussion, please call our retained consultants **Andrew White** or **John Dodd** on 01625 508100. We are keen to receive applications by **Monday 26th January 2015.**



Wickland Westcott





## Job Opportunity

Head of Teaching, Learning and Assessment Quality  
Management Spine (points 40-42) £39159 to £41540

### OVERALL PURPOSE OF JOB

- To support the College in aspiring to excellence in teaching, learning & assessment
- To drive continuous improvement through quality assurance, training & development & procedures, as well as management & co-ordination where required
- To drive innovation through up to date research, development & networking activities

The successful applicant will have a proven track record of the highest quality teaching experience as well as motivation, innovation and creativity and the ability to oversee a thoroughly comprehensive and meticulous system of recording, tracking and follow up.

### HOW TO APPLY

You can download an application pack from our College website [www.shipleigh.ac.uk](http://www.shipleigh.ac.uk) or alternatively to request an application pack, please contact: Shipleigh College, HR on 01274 327249 or email [jobs@shipleigh.ac.uk](mailto:jobs@shipleigh.ac.uk). Completed application forms should be returned to [jobs@shipleigh.ac.uk](mailto:jobs@shipleigh.ac.uk) or alternatively by post to HR, Shipleigh College, Salt Building, Victoria Road, Saltaire, BD18 3LQ.

If you wish to have an informal chat before making an application, please arrange a time to discuss this with Julie Bales (Vice Principal - Curriculum) on [jbales@shipleigh.ac.uk](mailto:jbales@shipleigh.ac.uk).

Closing date - Monday 2 February 2015  
Interview date - Friday 13 February  
Start date - ASAP



## Dynamic Maths Teacher

From Spine Point 22 (£22,516) to Spine Point 37 (£35,104)

### Are you:

- Wanting a change and looking for an exciting new challenge?
- Keen to focus your teaching only on 'D' Grade GCSE students to improve their grades to A\*-C?
- An enthusiastic and imaginative practitioner, who is passionate about teaching and learning?
- Someone who has high aspirations for students?
- Wanting to join a forward-thinking college team?

We are a vocational 16+ College of Further Education and are seeking to recruit to our expanding team of GCSE English and Maths staff. Nationally, learners who are aged 16-19 and who have not yet achieved a Grade C GCSE must undertake resits to reach the minimum C Grade benchmark for success. Therefore, all young people who join us from schools at age 16, with a Grade D in Maths, are given 3 hours of small group tuition.

We are trying creative approaches to ensure that large numbers of these marginal students succeed at improving from their current D Grade. One initiative was to appoint our Deputy Principal from the Secondary sector and now we are aiming to recruit experienced secondary level teachers who just want to focus on motivated borderline learners. Candidates are very welcome to visit our College - You will be impressed by the industrious, focused and purposeful vocationally based learning in a hugely inspiring environment.

At our recent Ofsted inspection we were awarded "Good with Outstanding features" (March 2014). 98% of our teaching staff are graded as Good or Outstanding, and it is now our goal to achieve Outstanding overall.

If you think this sounds exciting, please contact our Deputy Principal, **Rhiannon Hughes** (ex-Secondary School Headteacher) on **01322 629400** or e-mail [rhiannonhughes@nwkc.ac.uk](mailto:rhiannonhughes@nwkc.ac.uk).

Closing date for applications is Wednesday 21st January at 12 noon

Interviews will be held during week commencing 26th January 2015.

We are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of students. Appointment to this post will require an Enhanced Disclosure via the Disclosure and Barring Service.

NWKC, Oakfield Lane, Dartford, Kent, DA1 2JT



# ENGLISH AND MATHS JOBS

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## LECTURER IN MATHS

- Part Time, 4 hours per week minimum
- £23.02 per hour
- Start: ASAP
- End: May 2015

We are seeking to appoint a part time Lecturer in Maths to manage and deliver GCSE courses within the college from the DMP and GCSE department. This will involve teaching on a variety of different learning programmes as well as carrying out initial assessment, selection and induction of new students. This is a fixed term contract concluding at the end of May 2015.

Other responsibilities include assisting the Learning Area Manager, with the development of the GCSE area, as well as departmental duties and promotional activities.

You must have experience in maths teaching or be trained in specialist maths teaching. The Ideal candidate will have previous experience of teaching, be fully teacher trained and been assessed as good or outstanding in a teaching environment as well as possessing a level 5 or above qualification in mathematics. Excellent communication and organisational skills are another pre-requisite, as is the ability to be an effective team member.

**CLOSING DATE:** Friday 23rd January 2015

**INTERVIEW DATE:** W/C Monday 26th January 2015

For detailed information and to apply for this job, please e-mail [recruitment@centralbeds.ac.uk](mailto:recruitment@centralbeds.ac.uk).

*All roles are subject to an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) disclosure.*

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## FE WEEK PUBLICATION SCHEDULE 2015

FE Week publication schedule until end of June 2015

EDITION NUMBER	EDITION DATE	5PM DEADLINE
123	12-JAN-15	7-JAN-15
124	19-JAN-15	14-JAN-15
125	26-JAN-15	21-JAN-15
126	02-FEB-15	28-JAN-15
127	09-FEB-15	4-FEB-15
HALF TERM		
128	23-FEB-15	18-FEB-15
129	02-MAR-15	25-FEB-15
130	09-MAR-15	4-MAR-15
131	16-MAR-15	11-MAR-15
132	23-MAR-15	18-MAR-15
EASTER HOLIDAYS		
133	13-APR-15	8-APR-15
134	20-APR-15	15-APR-15
135	27-APR-15	22-APR-15
136	04-MAY-15	29-APR-15
137	11-MAY-15	6-MAY-15
138	18-MAY-15	13-MAY-15
HALF TERM		
139	01-JUN-15	27-MAY-15
140	08-JUN-15	3-JUNE-15
141	15-JUN-15	10-JUNE-15
142	22-JUN-15	17-JUNE-15
143	29-JUN-15	24-JUNE-15
144	6-JULY-15	1-JULY-15
SUMMER TERM		

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## FE Week Sudoku challenge

Difficulty: **EASY**

						5	2	
			7					4
2			5	9		1		
8			6				5	
	2	9				7	6	
	5				8			3
		7		5	6			2
9					3			
	4	1						

Difficulty: **MEDIUM**

					5	2	3	
							4	6
		7	6	1				
9				7			5	
		5		8		6		
	2			3				8
				6	7	3		
1	7							
	8	4	2					

**Solutions:**  
Next week

How to play: Fill in all blank squares making sure that each row, column and 3 by 3 box contains the numbers 1 to 9

### Last Week’s solutions

3	4	2	6	1	7	9	8	5
7	1	8	2	5	9	3	4	6
9	6	5	4	8	3	7	2	1
8	7	4	9	2	6	5	1	3
2	3	9	5	4	1	6	7	8
6	5	1	3	7	8	4	9	2
5	2	6	1	9	4	8	3	7
1	9	7	8	3	5	2	6	4
4	8	3	7	6	2	1	5	9

Difficulty:  
**EASY**

6	8	4	1	7	5	2	3	9
2	5	1	8	9	3	7	4	6
9	3	7	6	2	4	8	1	5
4	2	5	9	6	8	1	7	3
3	7	9	5	1	2	6	8	4
8	1	6	3	4	7	9	5	2
5	6	2	4	8	1	3	9	7
7	4	8	2	3	9	5	6	1
1	9	3	7	5	6	4	2	8

Difficulty:  
**MEDIUM**

## Spot the difference to WIN an FE Week mug

Spot **five** differences. First correct entry wins an *FE Week* mug. Text your name and picture of your completed spot the difference to 07969 166 374.



The winner of our last edition’s spot the difference was Martina Collett-Creedy (pictured left), careers and training officer at London’s Merton Adult Education. Pictured right is the winner of edition 121’s spot the difference (whose photo should have appeared in the last edition) Francine Warren, improvement practitioner at Lewisham Southwark College, and her helper, eight-year-old son Jacob Warren Yeatman.

